

Please delete paragraph 10.

Please replace paragraph 14 with the following paragraph:

[0014] Preferred embodiments of the present invention will permit the casing to be picked up by single pickup elevators, connected either by rotation or mechanical latch, and then the casing running tool to be "stabbed" into the bore of the top joint without damage, due to the rubber bull-nose guide 216. When the tool is at the correct depth of penetration within the casing bore, the hydraulic piston is actuated to drive the grapple down onto the wedge lock and secure the grapple to the casing wall. As the casing string is lifted, the wedge-lock continues to drive into the grapple bore, providing an ever increasing wedge lock. The compression spring installed within the hydraulic piston provides a "positive-lock" or failsafe should the hydraulic system fail for any reason.

Please replace paragraph 32 with the following paragraph:

[0032] The cylindrical body 2 is shown in Figure 1 in a section of casing 30 with gripping elements 5 in a radially extended position, engaging the inner wall 31 of the section of casing 30 beneath a threaded box 32.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-14.

1. (Cancel) An apparatus for facilitating the connection of tubulars using a top drive, which apparatus comprises:

 a body connectable to said top drive; and
 at least one gripping element radially displaceable by hydraulic or pneumatic fluid to drivingly engage a tubular to permit a screw connection between said tubular and a further tubular to be tightened to a required torque.

2. (Cancel) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said gripping element has an elastomeric gripping surface incorporating projecting metal inserts or saw blades.